HE CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWS LETTER

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SUMMER, 1955

PACIFIC SCHOOL OF RELIGION

OUR SOCIETY AND ITS MISSION

The Congregational Christian Historical Society has been established for a twofold purpose: to help us to preserve our heritage and to draw from it inspiration and instruction for present needs.

Peoples of other lands and in other times have sought and secured liberty, kept it for a short period and then lost it. But our American democracy has evidences of permanence. It has clearly defined principles of thought and action which have lifted our country to an acknowledged place in world leadership.

Our faults and weaknesses are evident to us as to all the world, but a moral idealism, a sense of rightness, a compassion for those who suffer, are our well-known qualities. We have ethical standards, individual and corporate, by which we condemn dishonesty in high places and low. We recognize and have confidence in the essential qualities of a good man or woman.

In building our heritage, churches of many denominations have had a worthy part, and our own contribution has been noteworthy. From the churches have come ideals of liberty, and the sense of responsibility in religious, social, and political life, the effort to understand the true nature and right method of education, and the obligations of national and world-wide brotherhood. Under the influence of the churches there have been developed free schools, home and foreign missions and many institutions for private and public service.

First in New England, then westward, then throughout the world, men and women have left enduring evidences of building the Better Way. One cannot understand our present society or government, our intense love of freedom, without knowing our early history.

Our Fathers learned, at great cost, that freedom once secured is not self-perpetuating. The itch for power is deeply rooted in human nature and mighty forces must be ever opposed. The ideals of religious and political liberty require a constant renewal.

In paying the high price for the right to be free men, the Fathers had always in mind " our children to come after us " and we of this generation stand as the heirs of those who generations ago, and others through the years, have contributed to our freedoms.

We have our share of responsibility. The ideals and motivation of liberty of the individual need the life blood of each generation pumped into them. New days bring new perils. Exploiters of men continue to arise with new and improved methods to reduce man " to means and not as ends."

This Society seeks to help individuals and churches to pay due respect to the leaders of the past, to learn from them how men may cooperate to defend their liberties of thought and action and to draw from them inspiration that we in our day may not falter or fail in building the civilization of friendly workmen. There are great riches in our history and we should make certain that these riches be not dissipated or ignored.

F. L. F.

A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE WORK OF THE SOCIETY

Enlisting and counseling local church historians. 160 now enrolled. Conference histories also in preparation in Connecticut, Minnesota, Southern Convention.

Emphasizing the value of the local church observing its anniversary, furnishing sample programs and literature for church and community use. 190 churches reached an anniversary in 1955.

Gathering historical records, books and commemoratory addresses. 120 church histories collected and placed in safekeeping.

Assisting pastors, church workers and students to secure desired information. Some letters are easily answered and others require considerable research. We have available much information. Requests given careful attention.

Recommending speakers for church occasions. (A group of competent speakers is being enlisted and on request recommended to the churches.)

Conducting a nation-wide program for a fitting observance of Forefathers' Day, the Sunday preceding Thanksgiving (this year November 20), that a better understanding of our heritage may be gained. Program material widely distributed.

Correcting erroneous or misleading statements in books and newspapers. (Several flagrant misstatements corrected.)

Writing manuscripts for general publication. More calls for this service than can be accepted.

Speaking on behalf of a better knowledge of our history. (Always a pleasure when time permits.) "An institution without a history is like a child without a family."

Running an office and keeping the treasurer supplied with sufficient funds to meet our modest budget. Still solvent, thanks to many interested individuals, conferences and national agencies. See financial report.

CALL FOR ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Society will be held in the Old South Church, Boston, Thursday, November 10th. The luncheon will be in honor of Professor Roland Bainton, inspiring teacher and the author of many books on church history, who will give the annual address. Reservations ($2.00 each) should be sent by November 7th to Rev. John A. Harrer, 14 Beacon St., Boston 8, Mass. The annual business meeting will follow at 2.00 P.M., to which all members and friends of the Society are cordially invited.

FREDERICK L. FAGLEY, *Secretary*
ARTHUR H. BRADFORD, *President*

REPORTS FROM STATE CONFERENCES

Florida. These days we are busy in the con ference office tabulating the annual reports c the churches. It has taken the better part of morning to straighten out matters of history A half dozen churches reported different date of organization than they did a year ago. Tw ministers seem to have changed their minds o the year in which they were ordained. Thi year for the first time our annual report blank contained a space for the name of a Churc Historian. Only eight churches appear to hav such an officer, but all would do well to con sider the appointment of some person to be re sponsible for writing their history year by yea as it unfolds. All in all our churches are mak ing more history than they may realize.

WILLIAM N. TUTTLE

Iowa. Voted (by the State Conference) tha we recommend that each church in the Con ference be urged to select a Church Historia and that the Church Historian send copies o all pertinent and significant items and action taken by the church to the State Conferenc office, Grinnell, Iowa; to the Congregationa Christian Historical Society, Room #56, 28 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, New York, an to the Chicago Theological Seminary, 575 University Avenue, Chicago, Ill.

JUDSON E. FIEBIGER

Minnesota. This Conference is planning t celebrate its centenary in 1956 by publishing State History to be prepared by Rev. Arv Steece of Princeton, Minn. Mr. Steece, wit the aid of cartoonist Oz Black, has prepared luncheon mat as a picto-map of Minnesota history, tracing in 17 pictures and drawings high order. The picto-map makes a good objec lesson for group study. Copy free on request t the undersigned.

ARVEL STEECE, Princeton, Minn.

New York. Mr. Chester Molyneux, who ha been acting as a voluntary State Historian, continuing his work and has just sent in te new local church histories and is securing addi tional local church historians.

The Southern Convention. Through th capable leadership of Mrs. W. E. Wissema of Greensboro, N. C., a member of the su committee on Christian Church History, th Woman's Convention has voted the life mem bership fund of the Southern Convention amounting to about $2000, to improve th historical room of Elon College Library, an also the women members are collecting an sending to the College valuable historical manu scripts and books, that the College may becom a center of historical interest not only to th churches of the Convention but for use students and writers on church history.

iritual Comradeship

The Presbyterian Historical Society (organ-
d 1852), in a letter to members of that
urch, writes:

"Wouldn't you like to meet some interesting
esbyterians? Through articles in the *Journal*
the Presbyterian Historical Society and
ough other historical materials you can enter
growing fellowship with Presbyterians, past
d present. For Presbyterians have influenced
nerican life and helpfully affected humanity
general. Membership in the Presbyterian
storical Society will introduce you to them.
u will sense a comradeship with men and
men who have provided us with some of
r best ideas, and whose labor and sacrifices
ve brought us a measure of religious freedom
d spiritual development."

This same situation obtains with regard to
r own Society, for our churches have worked
close cooperation with the Presbyterians in
e maintenance of ideals of freedom, education,
d Christian nurture. Our Society seeks to
ablish a living spiritual fellowship with our
at leaders of the past and to live worthily in
r generation, and to speak words in behalf
true religion for the enlargement of life and
establish the dignity of man in his efforts to
lk humbly with God to build his kingdom.

ngregational Doctrine of Community sponsibility

"Traditionally every Roman Catholic priest
sides everyone within the confines of his
ish as of his parish. Now this is a tradition
t is as deep in American Congregational his-
y as in American Roman Catholic history.
e good churchmen of New England never
estioned their responsibility for the spiritual
lfare of every soul in town and they exercised
s authority, whether the spiritually needy
ed it or not. While they may have sometimes
en tyrannical . . . they at least knew their
ponsibility to be a total one." — Dr. David
. Berry, *Executive Director, New York City*
ssion Society.

ission Accomplished

Dr. Warren H. Denison, chairman of the
ciety's Committee for Christian Church his-
y, reports that the task assigned his com-
tee has been completed. For the last two
rs Dr. Denison and his associates have been
y collecting Christian Church books, rec-
s, and other historical material. More than
persons have cooperated in searching attics,
aries, shelves, etc., and a fine body of ma-
al has been secured. Dr. Denison has classi-
the material and is dividing it with the
ngregational Library, Boston; the Hammond
rary, Chicago; Elon College, N. C.; Defiance
llege, Ohio; and the Society's office.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Receipts to August 1, 1955 (7 months)	$4,114.66
Expenses	3,578.37

Budget for 1955:

Rent	$ 450.00
Telephone and telegraph	50.00
Postage and Mailing	400.00
Supplies and Books	150.00
Meetings and Travel	250.00
Printing	750.00
Secretarial Service	2,420.00
Secretary, honorarium and Discretionary Fund	1,600.00
Advertising and Miscellaneous	100.00
Social Security	80.00
	$6,250.00
Receipts in hand and anticipated:	
The American Board	$ 500.00
The Board of Home Missions	750.00
The General Council	2,000.00
The State Conferences	1,100.00
To be Secured:	
Churches and Individuals	1,900.00
	$6,250,00

Note: This budget will need to be increased a small amount for 1956 on account of increase in rent, postage, and printing.

The Treasurer's report shows the generous support of the Society by the Boards, also the loyal backing of the General Council and of the State Conferences. There is also a growing support by the churches and interested individuals. A good beginning has been made but many more annual contributions and memberships are needed.

P. Donald Folwell, *Chairman,*
Finance Committee

Helen Kenyon, *Vice-President for*
Public Relations

MEMBERSHIP IN THE SOCIETY

1. Contributing National and State agencies are voting members of the Society and name representatives to the Board of Governors.
2. Churches contributing $10.00 or more per year become full voting members and those contributing less become associate members of the Society.
3. Individuals contributing $5.00 or more per year become sustaining (voting) members and those contributing less become associates of the Society.

All contributors receive the *News Letter* and other publications and reports of the Society.

Note: Contributions approved for Income Tax Credit by U. S. Income Tax Bureau.

Extra Copies of News Letter

The fall number of the *News Letter* will be a special Forefathers issue, with much interesting and usable material relating to our history. Additional copies may be secured at the cost of printing $2.00 per 100 postpaid (5 copies free) — PROVIDED request is received before *October 15th.* Usable for study groups, church societies, and general distribution.

AN EARNEST AND FRANK APPEAL

This issue of the *News Letter* contains our earnest and frank appeal for suppo of the Congregational Historical Society.

This Society performs a unique and most important function. It is set up f the purpose of helping our churches, and its services are increasingly appreciated.

Every church in our fellowship ought to be a member of the Historical Societ Every year a few new churches become supporting members. But it needs t minister, or some informed and interested lay member, to bring the Society's nee to the attention of the church.

A personal note to the Reader: Will you be the person to present this matt to your church?

The Basis of Membership, active and associate, for churches and individuals, described elsewhere in this *News Letter*. The requirements are very modest. you can make use of extra copies of this *News Letter*, the office will be glad supply them.

The Missions Council has approved the month of September for the Society annual appeal. Please send your contribution to the Congregational Historic Society, Room 56, 289 Fourth Ave., New York 10, and do it as soon as possibl Thank you.

ALBERT J. PENNER
Chairman, Executive Committee

THOUGHTS FOR TODAY

"If you cherish an undying love of civil and religious liberty, and mean to enjoy them yourselves, and to transmit them to your children and to your children's children, then you will be worthy descendants of those who landed from stormy seas on the Rock of Plymouth."
— *Daniel Webster*

"The American people delight in memories and we are fit to entertain great hopes only as we cherish great memories."
— George A. Gordon

"The practical aim and ideal of the Pilgrim Fathers, in their coming to the new world, was religion. This was the star that guided them hither." — *Horace Bushnell*

"O God: beneath thy guiding hand our exiled fathers crossed the sea and, when they trod the wintry strand with prayer and psalm, they worshiped thee."
— *Leonard Bacon*

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THE CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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Room 56, 289 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N. Y.

Postmaster: Form 3547 requested.